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ON CIA ACTIVITIES

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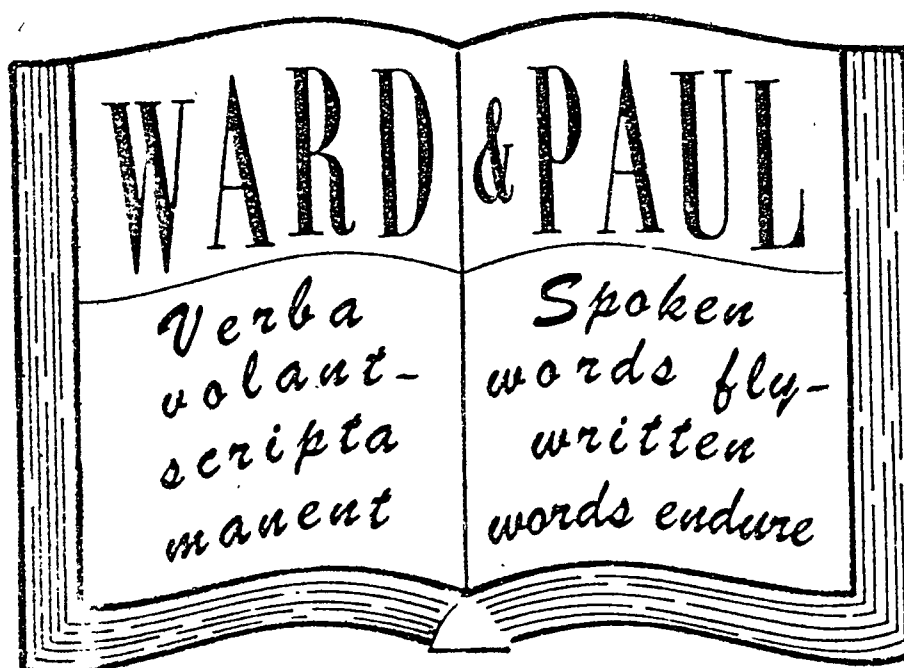
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1 the attempted assassination on two occasions of Fidel Castro
2 and all the top military commanders that used to come to the
3 Air Force Base. And remember that I had another job at the Air
4 Force Base training the military police. And I also was still
5 Chief of Security.

6 MR. OLSEN: Let me ask you, are you telling us that you
7 participated as a Cuban Air Force officer, and Chief of Training
8 military police and security and intelligence operations in the
9 Cuban Air Force, that participated in an attempt to assassinate
10 Castro?

11 MR. STURGIS: Yes, on two occasions, plus other
12 military officials.

13 MR. OLSEN: When did those attempts take place, during
14 the early part of 1959?

15 MR. STURGIS: Yes sir. I would say the first attempt
16 -- and I set it up as an exercise, that if I was to get the
17 green light -- which I did not anticipate that I would, because
18 there is such a thing as getting a green light -- and there is
19 another thing of doing something without the green light, in
20 other words, they do it but don't get caught -- but I did set it
21 up as an exercise, and I did have men on several occasions,
22 like I said, as a training exercise, stationed at the gate with
23 me there, with men stationed on the rooftops of the homes, -- my
24 excuse was for the protection of the entourage, Fidel and the
25 military commanders that he had with him, he had a hometown

1 bunch with him when they came to the Air Force, even with
2 General Bayo. And I felt that if I would get the nod to assas-
3 sinate them, I could do it within 30 seconds, high tail it and
4 everything.

5 MR. OLSEN: Was there something that you had drawn
6 up in the way of exercise as the result of the discussions with
7 the other Air Force officials?

8 MR. STURGIS: The Air Force and Army officials. This
9 information was given to the American Embassy. I again did
10 these exercises to try to get a diversion that if I would get
11 the nod to do the execution, that I would have some means of
12 diversionary tactics to draw attention away from the people who
13 did the execution, and that I was there with my people to prevent
14 it because of the security.

15 MR. OLSEN: Did you discuss these plans in advance with
16 Colonel Nichols?

17 MR. STURGIS: No sir. At the very -- I would say about
18 six weeks of the revolution was over with there was a great deal
19 of discontent among many of the top ranking military officers.
20 I knew these people personally, I was in with them at those
21 meetings and various places, and that they discussed, we all
22 discussed the assassination then. And some said, well, there
23 are some officers that will be with the group, Fidel and Raoul
24 and Che, that were not really with them. So they were split
25 on the idea of assassinating them. So they asked my opinion.

1 And I told them, well, in war innocent people do get
2 killed. If you are going to assassinate the man, the best place
3 to do it is at the front gate when he approaches, and to just,
4 if there is seven or eight jeeps, just to give everyone in all
5 of the seven or eight jeeps, whether they are pro or anti -- if
6 you are going to go ahead and kill him, people are going to get
7 hurt.

8 MR. OLSEN: I didn't understand whehter you answered
9 my question as to whether or not you had discussed in advance
10 with Colonel Nichols.

11 MR. STURGIS: No sir, after the meeting with the
12 different military commanders, I reported to Nichols the type
13 of discussions that were made at those meetings.

14 MR. OLSEN: And what was Colonel Nichol's response?

15 MR. STURGIS: Can we go off the record?

16 MR. OLSEN: If you want.

17 MR. STURGIS: Let's go off the record.

18 He told me to stand by, don't do anything, stand by,
19 stall.

20 MR. OLSEN: And did you then stand by and stall?

21 MR. STURGIS: Yes sir, I not only stood by, but then
22 I proceeded to do these exercises without asking Colonel Nichols,
23 I did those on my own, to prepare a special group of men to set
24 this up.

 MR. OLSEN: You prepared the exercise. Did you ever

1 get the green light from the people in Castro's Air Force and
2 Army to go ahead with an attempt?

3 MR. STURGIS: Oh, they wanted to do it, sir. The
4 only thing that held them back was me, I am the only one that
5 held them back, because they wanted to kill him in a minute.

6 MR. OLSEN: And so they ere urging that this be done,
7 but you were holding back on it?

8 MR. STURGIS: Right.

9 MR. OLSEN: And were you holding back on it at least
10 in part because of the request made by Colonel Nichols that you
11 would hold up on it, and not do anything?

12 MR. STURGIS: Right.

13 MR. OLSEN: Was any actual attempt made now to carry
14 out an assassination on Premier Castro?

15 MR. STURGIS: The only attempt was what I was doing
16 in these exercises.

17 MR. OLSEN: So that there was some planning, but no
18 attempt?

19 MR. STURGIS: Well, let me say this. We are on a very
20 thin piece of string there, because I was several times making
21 those exercises, and I was really, because of my high position
22 in the military. and because of the things that I knew -- and you
23 must understand that I did break into the headquarters of the
24 Cuban Army at Columbia Barracks, and did steal documents out of
there. And I also at my own headquarters, in my files, I did

1 photograph some things that were in my files from the past regime
2 that was there, but also of other officers that were there that
3 I could not trust, I wanted to see what kind of reports and
4 things that were made. So I did photograph those. So I did
5 make a breakin.

6 MR. OLSEN: What I am trying to do, Frank, is to draw
7 a distinction, if I can, between some plans for, some setting up
8 of exercises that would be preparatory to an attempt to assassi-
9 nate Premier Castro, Che Guevara and Raoul Castro and others that
10 might be with them. I am trying to distinguish that kind of
11 planning and preparation for an actual attempt to carry it out.

12 MR. ROETHE: Were there any shots ever fired?

13 MR. STURGIS: No sir. As a matter of fact, in order
14 to avoid that, because my people wanted to do it so badly, I had
15 to take the ammunition away from them just to contain them.

16 MR..ROETHE: Was this an exercise that was going to be
17 -- was this going to be a shooting?

18 MR. STURGIS: Oh, yes.

19 MR. ROETHE: So it was not a bombing or anything of
20 this sort, strictly a shooting?

21 MR. STURGIS: A shooting.

22 MR. OLSEN: How soon before you left Cuba did this
23 setting up of the exercises take place?

24 MR. STURGIS: It was within, I would say, four to six
weeks.

1 MR. OLSEN: Before you left?

2 MR. STURGIS: No, four to six weeks after we took
3 over the country, July 1, four to six weeks was the first
4 attempt. That was in the last of January or the first week in
5 February 1959, four or five weeks.

6 MR. OLSEN: Did this fever about assassinating Castro,
7 Raoul Castro and Guevara, subside after a little while?

8 MR. STURGIS: Oh, no.

9 MR. OLSEN: Did it keep on going all the time while
10 you were in Cuba?

11 MR. STURGIS: Yes sir. I did arrange to train the
12 same men for another attempt at assassination of him in the
13 headquarters of the Air Force on the second floor.

14 MR. ROETHE: Before you go on to that, why did you
15 never make an attempt the first time, why did you hold back?

16 MR. STURGIS: I was waiting for a nod from Nichols.

17 MR. ROETHE: And you never received that nod?

18 MR. STURGIS: I never received that.

19 MR. ROETHE: What got you started into a second
20 attempt to try a different type of assassination?

21 MR. STURGIS: Yes, it would be a different plan to
22 assassinate him. This came, I would say the last part of
23 February, if I am not mistaken. Things came to a fever pitch.
24 Even the American Government, through other agents inside of
Cuba, in the military and so forth, were getting a lot of

1 information about the Communist activity. And Fidel was coming
2 on his big thing, you know, about talking against the Americans.
3 And this was creating a lot of dissension with some of the top
4 military brass.

5 MR. OLSEN: That is, the military brass of the
6 Cuban Government?

7 MR. STURGIS: Of the Cuban military, yes. And at the
8 same time I am trying to recruit Commander Camelo Cienfugo.

9 MR. OLSEN: You had attempted to recruit him?

10 MR. STURGIS: I attempted to recruit Commander Camelo
11 Cienfugo, and also Commander Almejera. He was the National
12 Chief of Police.

13 MR. OLSEN: And who was the first one, Cienfugo?

14 MR. STURGIS: Commander Camelo Cienfugo was the Chief
15 of the Army -- I think Raoul was the Chief of the Armed Forces.

16 MR. OLSEN: Did you succeed in recruiting them?

17 MR. STURGIS: I met them at the Capri Hotel, where
18 the show as at. And I got them stoned out of their minds. And
19 we discussed money, how they would be willing to do, and so
20 forth. I didn't want to get into it too much, because I had
21 Camelo Cienfugo lined up more, he was thinking more in line with
22 what I was talking about. Commander Almejeira got stoned out
23 of his mind. And he just put his head on the table and went
24 to sleep. That was it. And so I had a hard time keeping Camelo
Cienfugo awake.

1 MR. ROETHE: At hose request were you trying to recruit
2 these gentlemen?

3 MR. STURGIS: Remember Embassy told me, please try to
4 recruit agents for them.

5 MR. OLSEN: You were attempting to recruit people who
6 would provide the information for the Embassy?

7 MR. STURGIS: To provide agents for the American
8 Embassy.

9 MR. ROETHE: You were not recruiting them especially
10 for assassination attempt?

11 MR. STURGIS: No. Now, Camelo gave me enough informa-
12 tion that night where I brok into the Chief of the Army head-
13 quarters -- he was Chief of the Army. I broke into their files,
14 and I did photograph and steal documents.

15 MR. OLSEN: What did you do with those documents?

16 MR. STURGIS: I turned them over to the others.

17 MR. OLSEN: To Colonel Nichols?

18 MR. STURGIS: Yes.

19 MR. ROETHE: Were you operating here now for Colonel
20 Nichols, or do you know if you were operating for CIA? Who was
21 the creator of this policy, if you know, Colonel Nichols as a
22 diplomat? Was he a diplomat at that time?

23 MR. STURGIS: Colonel Nichols was the American Military
24 Air Attache, which could be a cover for the CIA.

25 MR. OLSEN: You don't know if he was CIA or not?

1 MR. STURGIS: No. Again I say, nobody shows if they
2 are CIA, unless you are working yourself as an employee.

3 MR. OLSEN: Let me turn here, Frank, to this area.
4 Were you ever by Colonel Nichols requested to organize any
5 activity other than recruiting people to act as agent for the
6 American Embassy, were you ever asked to carry out any kind of
7 activity in Cuba?

8 MR. STURGIS: No sir.

9 MR. OLSEN: You were never asked to carry out any
10 assassination?

11 MR. STURGIS: No sir.

12 MR. OLSEN: Were you ever asked to carry out any
13 attempt to overthrow the Castro Government?

14 MR. STURGIS: Well, let's not say overthrow the
15 Castro Government. Colonel Nichols was very much, in his
16 thinking, in the discussions with him, against the Castro
17 Government. But then here you have a man that goes by the book.

18 MR. OLSEN: Let me ask you this. Were you ever asked
19 to carry out any action in Cuba on behalf of the American
20 Embassy?

21 MR. STURGIS: No sir.

22 MR. OLSEN: Or Colonel Nichols?

23 MR. STURGIS: No sir.

24 MR. ROETHE: So your breaking in and obtaining those
25 documents was something that you did on your own for information

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1 MR. OLSEN: After you came back from Cuba at the end
2 of June 1959 did you then settle in the Miami area?

3 MR. STURGIS: Yes sir.

4 MR. OLSEN: Did you take up employment in some normal
5 job in Miami, or did you become involved right away?

6 MR. STURGIS: I was not employed, sir.

7 MR. OLSEN: Did you engage in any business for your-
8 self at that point?

9 MR. STURGIS: Yes sir.

10 MR. OLSEN: Before we get to that, when you left Cuba,
11 did you manage to take with you any substantial amount of money
12 or wealth?

13 MR. STURGIS: No sir. I took some documents here that
14 belonged to Commander Ricardo Lorie in his preparation to leave
15 Cuba and come to exile. I helped to arrange for the escape
16 of the Chief of the Air Force and his wife. As a matter of fact,
17 I made contact with the American Embassy to see if they would
18 accept him in the Embassy. And I was told by the Embassy people
19 no. So I had to come here to make the arrangements for his
20 escape with his brother Sergio Diaz Bruil, who in fact himself
21 personally went to a yacht basin, Bertrand's Basin and rented
22 a boat, I believe it was a sailboat. With the plans that both
23 he and myself made, I proceeded to Cuba to pick up his brother,
24 the Chief of the Air Force.

25 MR. ROETHE: Before we get back here in the US, the

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1 of the mountains and in and out of the US.

2 MR. OLSEN: Frequently as a part of your revolutionary
3 activities?

4 MR. STURGIS: In order for me to get very close with
5 Fidel personally, I went through a great risk in buying guns
6 and equipment and smuggling guns and equipment to Cuba, both
7 by air, by automobiles, and in Key West by the ferry. And I had
8 an elaborate system made up.

9 MR. OLSEN: Let's go into that just a little bit. We
10 are going back into the revolutionary period, before the
11 revolution succeeded, while you were working for Castro, while
12 he was up in the hills. Who did you buy guns from in the US?

13 MR. STURGIS: I bought guns in Alexandria, Virginia.

14 MR. OLSEN: From whom?

15 MR. STURGIS: I believe the name of the company was
16 ARMCO. And the owner was an ex-CIA agent.

17 MR. OLSEN: Named what?

18 MR. STURGIS: I forget.

19 MR. ROETHE: Was this ostensibly a private enterprise?

20 MR. STURGIS: At least I thought it was a private
21 enterprise.

22 MR. OLSEN: He asked, was it ostensibly a private
23 enterprise. Was it actually a private enterprise?

24 MR. STURGIS: Let me say this here. Can I go back a
little bit, Mr. Olsen?

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1 And he did get the money.

2 MR. OLSEN: That is the kind of information that I
3 have been seeking. I am trying to pin down what the money
4 was for, who told it was CIA money, and what steps were taken
5 that led to your getting the money.

6 Were there any other operations or expenditures that
7 you had which you feel you are on strong, sound ground in
8 saying were financed by the CIA?

9 MR. STURGIS: I was asked to do an assassination.

10 MR. OLSEN: By whom?

11 MR. STURGIS: Can I hold back on that?

12 MR. OLSEN: No, I would prefer that you tell us, if
13 you will.

14 MR. STURGIS: It never was carried out.

15 MR. OLSEN: That is all right.

16 MR. STURGIS: I was contacted by this agent -- I am
17 trying to go ahead and think of the date again, because again
18 I will say, I had notes, and I keep them so far, and then I
19 destroy them. And I did tell the Senate Watergate Committee
20 that a friend of mine who was a CIA agent contacted me and asked
21 me if I would do an assassination. And I told him, yes, I
22 would. He said, good. Then, I will pass it on to my superior.
23 And he made contact with me later, at a later date. I believe
24 we had -- I am not sure -- I think we had either lunch or
25 dinner at some ranch house.

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MR. ROETHE: Is this in Miami?

MR. STURGIS: Yes.

MR. OLSEN: First of all, can you go back and tell me when you were approached by this friend of yours.

MR. STURGIS: This is why I say, I can't remember by the exact date, and maybe by talking --

MR. OLSEN: How about, if you give us the season of what year?

MR. STURGIS: The seasons in Miami are all along all the year around.

MR. ROETHE: How about just the year?

MR. STURGIS: I can't remember the year.

MR. ROETHE: Are we talking about after you -- this is after you got back from Cuba, obviously.

MR. STURGIS: Yes, it had to be -- let me see if I can narrow it down just about what year. Let's see. It had to be either before the Bay of Pigs, which is 1961, or after the Bay of Pigs, which again could be 1961. So I would say approximately it would be 1961.

MR. OLSEN: Then, where were you approached?

MR. STURGIS: In Miami.

MR. OLSEN: And is this somebody, Frank, for the moment, let's defer to your wishes, or your reservations, at least, by naming them. But is this somebody whom you

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1 MR. STURGIS: No, sir.

2 MR. OLSEN: Is it somebody who you knew to be a
3 contract agent of the CIA?

4 MR. STURGIS: No, sir. All I knew is that he was an
5 agent, and at a later date, it was proven that he was an
6 agent. So my contacts with this man throughout the years, how
7 he worked, my close contact with him, in Miami, the way of
8 operation, the way he handles himself, the people that he
9 was in close contact with, that the top political and military
10 people who were in exile that he was in touch with, the forma-
11 tion of the Bay of Pigs itself before the invasion, came
12 through this particular man. He was part of the forming of
13 this -- at least of the Revolutionary Council. And I was
14 approached by him and I told Sam about it. I said, Sam, what do
15 you think? The idiot -- I hope this never gets publicized.

16 MR. OLSEN: Trust us.

17 MR. STURGIS: I said, this idiot took me out, and
18 we had some lunch, and he asked me if I wanted to do an
19 assassination, or if I would do an assassination attempt for
20 the outfit.

21 And I looked him square in the face and I told him,
22 why did you come to me? And he says, well, Frank, like, who
23 else? You are a man that the Chief knows your background, and
24 I know your background, and I know you are capable. And you

25 a capable man. And if anybody can do it, you can do it.

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1 But the thing is, would you be interested?

2 And I said, yes, I would be.

3 MR. OLSEN: Did he talk to you about a sum of
4 money?

5 MR. STURGIS: No, no money was -- the discussion
6 of money was not involved in it, because I would not do any-
7 thing for money. And he knows better than to ask me, unless
8 it would be, Frank, what do you need for your expenses?

9 MR. OLSEN: Who was the target of this assassination?
10 Was it Fidel Castro?

11 MR. STURGIS: No. I don't know. What happened was
12 that I had another meeting with him, and he said he would
13 contact his Chief, and he would -- and he told me to contact
14 him later on, and I think he gave me a certain day to contact
15 him, and I said OK. You must remember that, how I know this
16 man as an agent, because he does the same things as I do,
17 in his wife, he types away, or at least, he has a wife who
18 types away, he makes all the reports, and stacks them in a
19 file cabinet. I have heard him talk to his case officer on
20 the telephone. And to me that was very stupid of him in doing
21 that even to me who was his friend. That is a stupid way of
22 doing things. Because he did not suspect that I was in touch
23 with Sam, he cannot know. And the only time that he suspected
24 that I had anything to do with CIA is when we were in prison,
25 and the man on the television said, yes, he used to work for the

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1 the CIA.

2 MR. OLSEN: When you say CIA, you were talking about
3 the Watergate, not the other agent and me?

4 MR. STURGIS: I am talking about the agent and me, who
5 was part of the Watergate group. And he was dumfounded and
6 said, what, you work for CIA? And I said, yes, sir, you dumb
7 bastard you, I was turning you in to my case officer.

8 MR. OLSEN: So neither one of you suspected --

9 MR. STURGIS: I knew he was an agent, but I didn't
10 know that I was in contact -- I never used the word -- or
11 at least I don't think I did, and I hope I haven't used it
12 today -- that I said I was an employee of CIA.

13 MR. OLSEN: No, I haven't even said that you were
14 an agent of the CIA.

15 MR. STURGIS: Or that I was connected with the CIA.

16 MR. OLSEN: Now, who was the target of this conver-
17 sation about assassination?

18 MR. STURGIS: I had a second meeting with him at
19 the Ranchhouse, and he told me, he says, well, there is
20 interest, Frank. He said, about this assassination, and I
21 said, fine. I said.

22 And then he started to questioning, how would you
23 do it? And I said, how do you mean how I would do it? There
24 are several ways of trying to do assassination. The things

25 have to know is who the person is, that is number 1, it is

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1 important, and where the person is at, which is important.
2 And then, I will have to go ahead and go to the place where
3 this man lives or what have you, after I know this information.
4 And I said then, I can go ahead and tell you how I can do
5 it. And he said, with a body, this and that, he will be
6 discovered, you know we can't be connected with it. And I
7 said, well, if you are worried about that, you do it. And he
8 said, well, I can't do it. And I said, OK, beautiful. And I
9 want --

10 I wanted to tell you something, I will do this,
11 because you are a friend of mine, and because you asked me.
12 But I will want more than that. And he said what is that? I
13 said I want it from somebody higher than you, from somebody
14 with authority. If you tell me -- and you are my friend, and
15 I believe you -- but I want it more from somebody else that
16 has some authority. You have a case officer.

17 I want your case officer to tell me to do an
18 assassination plot, and I will do it. But coming from you, you
19 are my friend, my buddy, but I have got to have more than
20 that for my protection.

21 MR. OLSEN: Did he ever put you in contact with
22 his case officer?

23 MR. STURGIS: I knew who his boss was.

24 MR. OLSEN: Who was his boss?

25 MR. STURGIS: Edwardo.

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1 Wait just a minute. I am sorry. I could be wrong
2 there. I said the wrong thing.

3 If I am going after the Bay of Pigs invasion, if
4 this did happen, as far as the date is concerned, after the
5 Bay of Pigs invasion, Edwardo did quit the operation and go
6 on some other assignment or what have you. So that means
7 he was no longer in the Miami area. So this part I had to
8 get a new case officer.

9 MR. OLSEN: Edwardo left Miami before the Bay
10 of Pigs, didn't he?

11 MR. STURGIS: He left after -- well, I don't know
12 I am sorry. Because there is a possibility that he may have
13 been either in Miami or he may have been in the Headquarters
14 in Washington. But I can't pin it down because I don't know
15 exactly where he was at.

16 MR. OLSEN: Did he ever make contacts with this man's
17 case officer?

18 MR. STURGIS: No, sir, because it had to be one of
19 two people, it either had to be Edwardo, whom I had never met,
20 or it had to be possibly (Jim Knowles⁰³) after Edwardo left.

21 MR. OLSEN: Did (Jim Knowles⁰³) take his place, then?

22 MR. STURGIS: I believe so, I believe (Jim Knowles⁰³)
23 did take his place as this party's case officer.

24 MR. OLSEN: And then, you did not actually have any
25 contact with his case officer?

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MR. STURGIS: When I told him that, I think I kind of stung him a little bit. And he said, well, OK, all right. Then, you will go through with it? And I said certainly, I will go through with it, I don't care who the hell it is. I said, you let me know. And hopefully, I was thinking of Fidel Castro, because I could have snuck into Cuba, I have done it so many times, and I would have taken a crack at killing Fidel.

MR. ROETHE: I missed something when I was out of the room. I take it you did not know the identity of the person whom you were being asked to assassinate?

MR. STURGIS: No, sir, I did not. I asked him -- you see, I didn't publish it, in other words, I was told no publicity. I was told, because Sam says, go ahead and work with him, and he said, let me know what is progressing.

MR. ROETHE: Is Sam what you would call your case officer?

MR. STURGIS: Sam is my contact, the man I was connected with.

MR. ROETHE: And you would always go to him before you would go ahead with some action like this?

MR. STURGIS: Oh, exactly. I wouldn't do anything unless I received an OK from somebody.

MR. ROETHE: Did you have any idea that this had anything to do with Cuba?

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1 MR. STURGIS: It always had to do with Cuba.

2 MR. ROETHE: You were aware that this assassination
3 had something to do with Cuba?

4 MR. STURGIS: I was thinking that it did, I could
5 have been wrong. I was thinking that it could have something
6 to do with Cuba.

7 MR. ROETHE: Did Sam seem to know anything about
8 the subject -- about this, or did this seem to come as a
9 surprise?

10 MR. STURGIS: It was a surprise. He was surprised.
11 that my friend approached me on something like this. And he
12 said, don't say, no. I said, I will do it to anybody. I said,
13 Sam, if it is all right, if this case officer -- Sam said, tell
14 me who the case officer is, and if it is true, OK.

15 MR. ROETHE: What was your motivation for saying
16 that you would do this?

17 MR. STURGIS: You know what a whore is?

18 MR. ROETHE: Do I know what a whore is?

19 MR. STURGIS: Yes.

20 MR. ROETHE: I guess I do.

21 MR. STURGIS: I don't mean to go ahead and question
22 you. I am sorry. But in intelligence a whore is an agent that
23 they would want that would do anything. But he has got to be
24 motivated by patriotism. And that he would do anything for
25 his country, regardless of what it was.

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1 MR. ROETHE: Assuming that it was something that an
2 official request made on behalf of the government?

3 MR. STURGIS: Well, you would think that if a case
4 officer -- and you would be surprised how powerful a case
5 officer -- what power a case officer has in his hands. He
6 has got a lot of power.

7 MR. OLSEN: Thank you very much, Frank.

8 (Whereupon, at 6:00 o'clock p.m., the interview was
9 concluded.)

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